

# Christian Community

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## SCHOOLS AND HOUSING HIGH AMONG NATION'S NEEDS

Our April issue was devoted to a consideration of some of the crucial problems of international policy and the status of legislation affecting them. This month we consider some of the currently important problems of domestic policy. Conspicuous among these are education, housing, power, and migrant programs.

### EDUCATION

With 1,600,000 more children in school this year than last, and an increase of 1,000,000 more expected annually each year for the next few years, estimates of classrooms needed — new and replacement—range from 370,000 to over 900,000. Six hundred thousand is regarded as a fair estimate. There is no longer any question that to provide buildings, classrooms, teachers, and equipment is a primary necessity. It is also widely recognized that—because of variations in economic advantages—to

narrow the gap between resources and needs is not only a local but also a national responsibility. The Federal Council of Churches, the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, and many other public interest groups have gone on record as favoring some form of federal aid for the public schools in order to give every child in this country a better opportunity.

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has embodied its recommendations in a bill, S. 968, introduced by Senator Alexander Smith. This bill does not aim to bring up the lag in funds for current expenses but proposes to make available \$200,000,000 in grants and to guarantee loans up to a limit of \$750,000,000 for the erection of school *buildings*. The Administration claims that this program will stimulate \$7 billion worth of school construction, calculated to relieve the shortage by 200,000 classrooms.

Public school educators have been virtually unanimous in testifying that the bill is inadequate, even within the framework of what it aims to do. In the hearings before the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, Secretary Hobby and Commissioner of Education Brownell were questioned at great length, particularly by Senators Paul Douglas and Herbert Lehmann, who have been staunch champions of the schools. School districts would appear to be placed in the position of having to prove both that their projects are financially sound *and* that they are unable to float their bonds in the open market! The high interest rates (3½%) are a further target of criticism. Large cities, greatly in need of assistance, which finance their building programs through direct taxation rather than through bond issues could expect little help from this source. It was also charged that the bill as written en-



Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority  
Before and After—Public Housing Costs the Community Less than the Slum It Replaces.



dangers local control of schools. A number of the educational authorities represented expressed preference for a bill like S. 5, introduced by Senator Lister Hill, which would provide \$500,000,000 a year for two years as emergency assistance to the states for school construction, provided states submit appropriate plans and not more than two-thirds of the costs of any project shall come from Federal funds.

## HOUSING

The Eighty-third Congress trimmed down the President's request for a four-year public housing program calling for 140,000 units, by authorizing a maximum of 35,000 for only one year. These in turn were hedged with so many restrictions that Federal Housing Administrator Albert M. Cole plans to request removal of some of these limitations. The President is now asking for legislation to permit 35,000 a year for two years, to care for families displaced by slum clearance.

As Lee F. Johnson of the National Housing Conference told the members of the Churchmen's Washington Seminar, even this would not meet the needs of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Detroit. Washington alone requires provision for between 10,000 and 20,000 families in the next ten years. With the national over-all need for the next twenty years estimated as over two million homes per year, at least ten percent, or 200,000, of these should be represented by low-rent public housing.

Housing legislation is the responsibility of the House and Senate Banking and Currency committees, Senator J. W. Fulbright and Representative Brent Spence, chairmen, respectively.

## INVESTIGATIONS

A new set of rules for investigative committees has been adopted by the House of Representatives. They provide that no less than two members must be present for a committee to take testimony and receive evidence; that testimony tending to defame, degrade, or intimidate any person shall be taken in executive session and require committee approval before being made public; that witnesses at investigative hearings may be accompanied by their own counsel; and that at the discretion of the

committee, witnesses may submit brief and pertinent sworn written statements for inclusion in the record.

This action came as the result of an effort to reform procedures which have lent themselves to abuse. The bill adopted, according to Representative Hugh Scott, falls short in the following respects: It still allows a committee to circulate derogatory information from its confidential files without notice to the individuals concerned. It allows a committee to make public defamatory testimony given in executive session or to issue reports defaming individuals or groups without notice or hearing. It does not allow a person under investigation to cross-examine witnesses, or entitle a witness to even twenty-four hours notice of a hearing in which his career or reputation is at stake. Nor would it prevent the committee from acting as a court passing judgment on the guilt or innocence of individuals, or inquiring into matters unrelated to any government function.

## POWER AND RESOURCES

The General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, in the light of efforts to reverse our national policy of careful stewardship of national resources, at its 1953 session urged the conservation of these resources for the sake of the welfare of the whole people in both this and future generations. Since then, several developments have taken place which bear careful scrutiny:

A conspicuous example was the so-called Dixon-Yates case, in which the Atomic Energy Commission entered a contract allowing a private firm to build a power plant and furnish electric power at a cost to the government much higher than would be available from the Tennessee Valley Authority. The figure was higher than that of another private group (which subsequently withdrew its proposal when, it is reported, pressure was applied to the engineering firm with which they were dealing). Chairman Strauss of the AEC has resisted all efforts to reconsider the contract — although three of the five members of the Commission objected to the procedure. (Douglas Cater has written up the story in *The Reporter* for October 21, 1954.) Whether or not Congress will stop the

execution of the contract remains to be seen.

The philosophy of favoring private enterprise whatever the cost has been manifested also in the policies of the Department of the Interior. Secretary McKay's fellow-Oregonian, freshman Senator Richard L. Neuberger, has subjected this policy to critical analysis in *The Reporter* for February 24, 1955. According to the Senator, the "partnership" of federal and private operation is giving the private partner the revenue-producing items (electric power), while the government assumes responsibility for the "unprofitable" features — fish ladders, locks, flood-control gates. Thus the Hell's Canyon hydroelectric site would be given to the Idaho Power Company. The Administration has also supported bills which would benefit lumbermen and livestock growers at the expense of others who have an interest in our National Forests. Such a bill, which would give stockmen an equity in their grazing permits and limit the authority of Rangers to police certain public land, was barely defeated in the last sessions of Congress.

## AGRICULTURE

Upon recommendation of the Department of Labor, under Public Law 472, the President has appointed the Secretaries of Labor, Agriculture, Interior, and Health, Education and Welfare, together with the Administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, to an Interdepartmental Committee on Migratory Labor. The purpose of this committee is to coordinate and stimulate the activities of all Departments represented for improving migrant working conditions. Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell is chairman, and the program will be administered by the Bureau of Labor Standards, Mr. Paul E. Gurske, Director.

Those interested in migrants — and considering that 163,000,000 Americans eat crops harvested by the 2,000,000 so designated, who isn't? — may secure upon request from Beatrice McConnell, Bureau of Labor Standards, Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C., two publications: *When the Migrant Families Come Again*, describing how local groups can help meet needs and problems, and *Status of Agricultural Workers Under State and Federal Labor Laws*.



# THINGS TO DO NOW FOR THE CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT EMPHASIS

1. Call together the chairman of your committees on evangelism, stewardship, and Christian social action. Discuss with them the proposed Emphasis on Christian Commitment and Christian Community. With the help of their committees, formulate a time table for the activities suggested in the Manual, *Commitment for Christian Living*:
  - A Congregational Retreat or Planning Conference
  - An Every-Family Visitation in September
  - Special Services in October
  - Five Sunday or week-night Study Programs in October
2. Order enough additional copies of the Manual to supply the committee, the consistory, and other leaders. Single copies have been mailed to all pastors.
3. Present the plans as recommended to your Consistory or Church Council for their approval, with whatever modifications may be deemed necessary. Appoint an Emphasis committee, which might be composed of the standing committees on evangelism, Christian social action, and stewardship, with additional representatives from other departments and interests of the church.
4. Assist this committee in appointing subcommittees, such as program, publicity, visitation, etc.
5. Order other needed supplies — Study Packet, Instructions for Visitors, Attendance Covenant Cards, copies of the Call to Commitment, and other resource material. These are all listed in the Appendix to the Manual and on a convenient Order Blank.



## Speaking of Books

So much of our discussion of foreign affairs is affected by an idealism which is irrelevant because it has not taken account of the complexities or the dimensions of the problems which must be solved. Or it lapses into an ostensible "realism" which dismisses moral considerations as out of place in politics. Here are three books that will help us acquire information, perspective, and motivation in suitable proportions.

Of the three, Dorothy Fosdick's *Common Sense and World Affairs* (Harcourt Brace, \$3.50) will probably have the greatest appeal for the largest circle of readers. Out of her experience first as a teacher, then in the State Department, and now as a contributor to the *New York Times* and a consultant for the National Broadcasting Company, Miss Fosdick writes wisely and well concerning the principles of responsible foreign policy which she rightly points out is the business of every American. One gets an idea of the content and the treatment by scanning some of the chapter heads: "Fashioning your methods in the light of your end is prudence," "To believe you are more generous than

you really are is hazardous," "Safety lies in acting on the truth of the matter rather than the imagination of it."

Another ex-member of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, Charles Burton Marshall, has written an important book on *The Limits of Foreign Policy* (Holt, \$3.00). With pertinent quotations and allusions, ranging from St. Luke to Don Marquis, and from Shakespeare to Reinhold Niebuhr, Mr. Marshall gives us an interpretation of our past and an analysis of our present responsibilities and possibilities that is at once sobering and sensitive. One may not accept all of the author's conclusions, but one will have to take into account the troublesome facts of life with which he is concerned.

And for those who want to go back to a more philosophical effort to relate Christian thought not to the experience of the United States alone, but to the question of international relations in general, Herbert Butterfield's *Christianity, Diplomacy and War* (Abingdon-Cokesbury, \$1.75) can be recom-

# PLAN JOINT INSTITUTE

The Commission on Christian Social Action and the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches will join forces to conduct a one-week Institute on Christian Social Action for the midwestern section of the country. The Institute will be held at Chicago Theological Seminary's unique Conference House, September 12 to 16. The theme is "Working Together in Christian Social Action."

Featured on the program will be daily Bible Study; workshop periods on the planning of local social action programs, communications, visual aids, and group dynamics; discussion periods on international affairs, race relations, economic life, and civil liberties; at least one field trip; and a service of worship at the close of every day. Leaders will include Dr. Elmer Arndt, of Eden Theological Seminary; Professor Hugo Thompson, of Macalester College; the Reverend Myron Fowell of the Massachusetts Conference of Congregational Christian Churches; members of the staffs of the two sponsoring agencies; and others.

The Commission on Christian Social Action will hold its semi-annual meeting during the latter days of the Institute, beginning Wednesday evening and running through Friday afternoon. The Council for Social Action will be meeting at the same time, and several joint sessions are planned.

Pastors, laymen, women, especially those in Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, and other nearby states, are urged to avail themselves of this opportunity for fellowship and training. Registration is only \$20, and includes room and board from Monday, 2 p. m. through Friday's noon meal. Registrations may be sent to and further information may be secured from the office of the Commission on Christian Social Action.

mended. One aspect of Professor Butterfield's analysis is that ill-considered moral judgments have made the "war for righteousness" the most deadly, and prevailing, type of war. He pleads for more modest, limited, less moralistic goals in diplomacy as basic to a tolerable international order. Not power, but ideology (our own no less than the enemy's), is to be distrusted. There are many useful insights into historical and political problems.



# NEWS FROM THE FIELD

The Committee on Christian Social Action at Bethlehem Church, Evansville, Indiana, recently sponsored a discussion of the subject "The Challenge of Militarism in 1955 to Basic American Freedoms." Growing out of the meeting came the following statement:

"At the present time it is urgent that church members do more reading and research . . . We recommend that each individual secure a copy of Stop, Look, Listen (published by the Church Peace Union, distributed by CCSA @ 5c a copy). These pamphlets can serve as guides so that honest reports of current events and responsible interpretations of what they mean may be had.

"Regarding the proposed UMT-Compulsory Reserve Bill, we recommend that church members write periodically to our Congressmen so that they may know the church is still anxious that our country adhere to its traditional policy of freedom from permanent peace time conscription."

Bethlehem Church plans to go on to study "The National Problem of Mental Care," using as source material the Washington Packet on this subject prepared in January by the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches.

This subject of adequate care for the mentally ill is receiving much attention, as it deserves, throughout the nation. New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Michigan have recently passed bond issues to provide better facilities for the treatment of the mentally ill. Lake Erie Regional Women's Guild committee on Christian

social action distributed study materials, and urged support for legislation pending before the Ohio General Assembly, advocating a \$115,000,000 bond issue to provide space and staff urgently needed to care for Ohio mental patients.

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The Reverend Dale Heckman, Evangelical and Reformed associate pastor in the Federated Community Church at Flagstaff, Arizona, sends a report concerning an interesting experiment there. For three Sundays, the regular church school teachers were excused from their classes so that they could engage in a special course in leadership training. On those three Sunday previously prepared substitute teachers gave instruction throughout the Church School in a special course on "Christians and Peace." On the same Sundays the two pastors of the church shared the sermon time, with sermons on "The Meaning of Peace." After the second Sunday of the experiment Pastor Heckman wrote: "It's refreshing, it's thought-provoking, it's productive of new insights for many, including the preachers."

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The Reverend Harvey Schlichter, pastor in the Manchester Charge, Potomac Synod, has developed a popular "Christian Newsgram" which he distributes each Sunday with the church bulletin. The "Newsgram" is mimeographed, and carries brief items concerning events of the preceding week, or concerning issues of special concern to Christians who are looking for ways to make their Christian convictions count in terms of every day life.

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Recently someone suggested that the Commission send ministers occasional releases of news, comments, or action suggestions for use in parish papers and Sunday bulletins. That is a good idea. But until we get the kind of staff and budget that can do those things, could not ministers use *Christian Community* that way—not as a secret source of information, but as something to share? Every once in a while one or another of the parish papers that come to the office contains an item taken—with or without credit, and we don't care which—from *Christian Community*. We are just immodest enough to wish that more ministers would adopt the practice!

## Concerning Maximum Employment

The following statement on maximum employment was adopted by the Commission on Christian Social Action at its recent Cincinnati meeting:

We cannot be complacent when many—or even a few—persons, able and willing to work, are unemployed. For the right to work is an important right which ought to be acknowledged and respected by the total community.

The attainment of "full" employment requires the cooperation of government, management, and organized labor. It involves a number of policies and practices, rather than any one single proposal.

We urge that the objective of full employment be given full consideration in evaluating various proposals bearing on the economic order. We further urge that consideration be given to proposals for increasing employment, retaining workers, and as a means of reducing hardships, extending unemployment benefit payments.

## NOTE ON NRP

A new bill, H. R. 5297, has been substituted by a Subcommittee of the House Committee on Military Affairs for H. R. 2967, setting up a National Reserve Plan. It provides for an eight-year period of obligation for all youths entering the Armed Forces, to be discharged ordinarily by two years active duty, three years in the Ready Reserve (48 weekly periods plus 17 days of active training), and three years in the Standby Reserve. Between 100,000 and 250,000 under the age of 18 may enlist for six months active training to be followed by seven and one-half years in the Ready Reserve.

Representative Overton Brooks, the chairman of the subcommittee, has announced that he will propose two further provisions not accepted by the subcommittee: (a) that the Defense Department be given power to induct men into the six-month program if the quota is not met by enlistments, and (b) that the President be given power to call up 750,000 Ready Reservists without prior authorization by Congress in time of emergency.

### Christian Community

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